

IN THE CLAIMS:

Amend claims 1 and 6-16, cancel claims 2-5 without prejudice or admission, and add new claims 17-24 as shown in the following listing of claims, which replaces all previous listings and versions of claims.

1. (currently amended) A retractable-nib writing tool having a retractable writing body in a shaft tube and having a sealing lid and a sealing tube which seal the writing nib of ~~said~~ the writing body in association with the forward and backward movements of ~~that~~ the writing body, wherein: ~~said~~ the sealing lid and a guide tube fixed to ~~said~~ the writing body are linked by a plurality of thin line portions, ~~said~~ the sealing lid and the thin line portions are formed integrally, and ~~said~~ the sealing lid is opened and closed relative to ~~said~~ the sealing tube by the forward and backward movements of ~~these~~ the thin line ~~portions.~~ portions; and wherein at least one thin line portion out of the plurality of thin line portions which are advanced by the forward motion of the guide tube is regulated and other thin line portions can be bent and deformed.

2.-5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) The A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim ~~17~~ 1; wherein both the sealing force between ~~said~~ the sealing lid and ~~said~~ the sealing tube and the sealing force between ~~said~~ the writing nib and ~~said~~ the sealing tube are set to 50 to 100 kPa.

7. (currently amended) The A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim ~~17~~ 1; wherein at least either one of ~~said~~ the sealing lid and ~~said~~ the sealing tube is composed of a material whose water vapor transmissivity prescribed under ASTM F 1249 is not more than 3.0(g. mm/m².day) under the condition of 37.8°C (90% RH).

8. (currently amended) A retractable-nib writing tool having a retractable writing body in a shaft tube and having a sealing lid and a sealing tube which seal the writing nib of ~~said~~ the writing body in association with the forward and backward movements of ~~that~~ the writing body, wherein: ~~said~~ the sealing tube is fixed within ~~said~~ the shaft tube, ~~said~~ the sealing lid and a guide tube are arranged respectively ahead of and behind ~~this~~ the sealing tube to fix ~~said~~ the guide tube to ~~said~~ the writing body and ~~said~~ the guide tube and ~~said~~ the sealing lid are linked with a plurality of flexible thin line portions, so configured that, while an opening at the forward end of ~~said~~ the sealing tube is closed as ~~said~~ the plurality

of thin line portions keep ~~said~~ the sealing lid in a state of being pressed against ~~said~~ the sealing tube when ~~said~~ the writing body is in a retracted position, ~~said~~ the sealing lid turns to open the opening at the forward end of ~~said~~ the sealing tube as the forward movement of any of ~~said~~ the plurality of thin line portions relative to ~~said~~ the sealing tube is restricted and those of the rest of the thin line portions are permitted when ~~said~~ the writing body is to move forward.

9. (currently amended) ~~The~~ A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim ~~8~~, 8; wherein, out of ~~said~~ the plurality of thin line portions, the thin line portion whose forward movement is to be regulated is provided with a bulged portion, and the outer circumferential part of ~~said~~ the sealing tube is provided with engaging step portions to engage with ~~said~~ the bulged portion when ~~said~~ the writing body moves forward.

10. (currently amended) ~~The~~ A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim ~~8~~, 8; wherein ~~said~~ the sealing lid and ~~said~~ the thin line portions are integrally formed.

11. (currently amended) The A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim ~~8~~, 8; wherein a springy member ~~intervenes~~ is disposed between said the sealing tube and said the guide tube and, when said the writing body is in a retracted position, said the plurality of thin line portions keep said the sealing lid in a state of being pressed against said sealing tube by the urging of said springy member.

12. (currently amended) The A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim ~~11~~, 11; wherein said the plurality of thin line portions are arranged between said the guide tube and said the sealing lid so that, when said the writing body is in the retracted position, the direction of the force working from said the plurality of thin line portions on said the sealing lid is identical with the axial direction of said the shaft tube.

13. (currently amended) The A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim ~~8~~, 8; wherein said the plurality of thin line portions are arranged along the inner circumferential face of said the shaft tube and a lubricant is applied to the surfaces of said the plurality of thin line portions.

14. (currently amended) ~~The~~ A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim ~~8,~~ 8; ~~characterized in that wherein the thin line portions each have a plurality of reduced-diameter portions are provided in said thin line portions and said~~ along the length thereof, and the thin line portions can be bent ~~in said~~ at the reduced-diameter portions.

15. (currently amended) ~~The~~ A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim ~~8,~~ 8; wherein the tips of said the plurality of thin line portions are arranged at equal intervals along the outer circumferential part of said ~~the~~ the sealing lid.

16. (currently amended) ~~The~~ A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim ~~8,~~ 8; wherein a soft member is disposed in a position where said the sealing lid is opposite said the sealing tube.

17. (new) A writing tool comprising: a tubular member having an open front end; a writing body axially slidable in the tubular member between a forward position in which a writing nib of the writing body extends through the open front end of the tubular member and a rearward position in which the writing nib is retracted into the tubular member; a sealing tube disposed in the tubular member at a front portion thereof and having a front end through which the

writing nib passes as the writing body moves forward in the tubular member to its forward position and behind which the writing nib retracts when the writing body is in its rearward position; a sealing lid disposed forwardly of the front end of the sealing tube and being movable to open and close the front end of the sealing tube; a guide tube slidably disposed in the tubular member in contact with the writing body and through which extends a portion of the writing body; a spring disposed in the tubular member and interposed between the sealing tube and the guide tube to resiliently urge the guide tube and the writing body rearwardly to normally position the writing body in its rearward position; and a plurality of flexible elongate members each connected at a front end thereof to the sealing lid, one or more of the flexible elongate members being connected to the guide tube so that when the guide tube moves rearwardly the one or more flexible elongate members pull the sealing lid to close the front end of the sealing tube, and another of the flexible elongate members being slidable relative to the guide tube and engagable with the sealing tube during forward movement of the writing body to restrict forward movement of the another flexible elongate member to permit the sealing lid to open the front end of the sealing tube.

18. (new) A writing tool according to claim 17; wherein the sealing lid and the flexible elongate members comprise a unitary structure.

19. (new) A writing tool according to claim 17; wherein the plurality of flexible elongate members are arranged at equal intervals around the sealing lid.

20. (new) A writing tool according to claim 17; wherein the flexible elongate members are disposed along an inner circumferential surface of the tubular member and are coated with a lubricant.

21. (new) A writing tool according to claim 17; wherein the another flexible elongate member has an enlarged portion; and the sealing tube has an engaging portion positioned to engage with the enlarged portion during forward movement of the writing body to thereby prevent further forward movement of the another flexible elongate member while the writing body continues forward movement to its forward position.

22. (new) A writing tool according to claim 21; wherein the engaging portion of the sealing tube comprises a step portion of the sealing tube that protrudes from an outer side face of the sealing tube.

23. (new) A writing tool according to claim 17;
further including a knocking member connected to a rear end of
the writing body and projecting outwardly through an open rear
end of the tubular member.

24. (new) A writing tool according to claim 17;
wherein the flexible elongate members comprise flexible lines.